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A PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY LETTER

6 March 2012

re: **RSB 276 – An Act Concerning Licensing Requirements for Acupuncturists
For the Public Health Committee Public Hearing March 7th, 2012**

Testimony of David R. LoPriore, Owner and Director, Acupuncture, Shiatsu & Oriental Medicine of New England clinic, and Headmaster, Kosho Shorei Shin Kai and Bushidokai Dojo, of East Lyme, Connecticut.

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and Members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is David LoPriore. I have lived in Connecticut my entire adult life, and am a Licensed Acupuncturist in the State of Connecticut, as well as a teacher of traditional Asian arts of self-cultivation and holistic wellness. Having served the citizens of Connecticut and many other Americans in these capacities for the past twenty-seven years, I feel a great kinship and responsibility toward my community and continue to work enthusiastically for the holistic health of citizens of Connecticut. I live in Niantic with my wife and four daughters, and teach and practice in East Lyme. My patients and students live all over southeastern Connecticut especially in East Lyme, Lyme, Waterford, Norwich, Colchester, Groton and Stonington, up and down the shoreline, and many travel from the northern and western parts of Connecticut. Because of my seniority and reputation as an Acupuncturist and teacher, many patients and students travel here for my services from other states, including Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Washington, and South Carolina, and other countries, including Japan, Brazil, and Ireland most recently. My family and I love the beautiful, peaceful environment of our Connecticut beaches and shoreline, and the people who live here. I feel fortunate to be able to share our state's beauty and resources with the many visitors I host, provide quality holistic healthcare for, and teach.

I would like to thank the Committee for raising SB 276 and encourage you to approve the bill in your Committee, with the revisions and recommendations that the Connecticut Society for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CSAOM), of which I am a member, is working on with the Department of Public Health. It is absolutely essential to the health and wellness of Connecticut's citizens to have comprehensive licensing and practice requirements for the appropriate administration of acupuncture and Oriental medical services. Requiring the current industry standards for qualifications for professional healthcare providers in this medicine, such as education hours, the passing of professional qualifying exams, ongoing professional development, and nationally-recognized certification will keep the public from receiving sub-standard, unsafe and even dangerous medical care at the hands of unqualified, untrained or under-trained people. This includes healthcare providers of other specialties such as Chiropractors and MDs, even if they are well-meaning, who do not possess the qualifications to administer acupuncture services. Over the last twenty years, many patients and others whom I have spoken to have received inappropriate, sub-standard and in many cases injury-causing treatments via "acupuncture" and other techniques represented as Oriental medicine administered by "practitioners" who have been unqualified, under- and uneducated in this modality. This hurts patients, it hurts my profession, and it reduces confidence in this exceptionally beneficial ancient medicine. Please update the law to reflect what is appropriate to qualify Connecticut State Licensed Acupuncturists correctly in the acupuncture profession.

I thank the Committee for their consideration of RSB 276.

Sincerely,

(Electronically-signed)

David R. LoPriore, L.Ac.

CC: State Senator Andrea Stillman and State Representative Ed Jutila